

**RULING THE EMPIRE:
THE PORTUGUESE COLONIAL OFFICE
(1820s-1926)*****

Portugal was one of the first and most enduring European colonial powers of modern times: 1415 and 1975 mark the beginning and the end of a long imperial cycle that left many imprints in different continents of the globe. While a forerunner in the Great Age of Discoveries, in the 19th and early 20th centuries Portugal was a poor and rural country in the south periphery of Europe⁽¹⁾, with high illiteracy rates, economic backwardness and unhealthy public finances. This small State held, however, the sovereignty of vast areas in Africa (Angola, Mozambique, Guinea-Bissau, Cape Verde and Sao Tomé and Príncipe), while still possessing some small territories in India (Goa, Damão and Diu), in China (Macao) and in the Pacific Ocean (East Timor). Since the scramble

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⁽¹⁾ See Jorge Miguel Pedreira, "To have and to have not. The economic consequences of empires: Portugal, 1415-1822", *Revista de História Económica*, vol. 16, 1998, pp. 433-461, and "The obstacles to early industrialization in Portugal, 1800-1870: a comparative perspective", in Jean Batou (ed.), *Between Development and Underdevelopment. The Precocious Attempts at Industrialization of the Periphery, 1800-1870*, Geneva, 1991, pp. 347-379.

for Africa, in the late 19th century, Portugal tried to follow the major colonial powers. She strived to develop and control her colonies, to enlarge military occupation, and to increase the economic relations between the overseas territories and the metropolis.

Throughout the last two centuries different policies for the Portuguese empire were designed and implemented. Yet, a common feature crossed the colonial ideology of the ruling elites: that the national independence and the international role of the country could only be preserved if it stayed somehow in articulation with the overseas territories⁽²⁾.

Focusing on the period since the 1820s until 1926, this article outlines the major developments in the Portuguese colonial policy, describes and analyses the transformation of the central office for colonial affairs – from a small ministerial department to an autonomous ministry –, and presents a collective biography of both the politicians (Cabinet ministers) and administrators (directors-general) who ran it.

1. Portugal and Her Colonies in the 19th and early 20th Centuries: An Overview

From the 15th century onwards, the European expansion to other continents was a source of successive new challenges for models of administration and governance. There was a constant need to innovate, adjust and provide answers to problems unknown until then. The presence of the bureaucratic machinery was weak and supported by an uneven military occupation, carried out with a small number of soldiers and officers. The knowledge of the inland territory was poor and the European presence was limited to the coast, the main ports and urban centres. Different societies in faraway geographical contexts, sometimes with very specific cultural features and forms of economic organization, led to negotiations and the building of pacts with local elites. The mana-

⁽²⁾ See Valentim Alexandre, “A África no imaginário político português (séculos XIX e XX)”, *Penélope*, vol. 15, 1995, pp. 39-52; and Yves Léonard, “A ideia colonial, olhares cruzados (1890-1930)”, Francisco Bethencourt / Kirti Chaudhuri (eds.), *História da Expansão Portuguesa*, vol. IV (*Do Brasil para África, 1808-1930*), Lisbon, 1998, pp. 521-550.

gement of authority and power was often based on a relatively informal autonomy of local agents. Yet the administrative and power networks remained centralized. The models of governance and administration did not remain unchanged during the *Ancien régime*. Whereas they often crystallized and were in use for a relatively long period, they were altered or adapted whenever necessary, following pragmatic demands. However, this pragmatism was not clearly rational and voluntary. It often was just the sense of the possible way of working. The prosaic expectations of trade profits and the slave trade remained the blueprint of the European presence.

In the 18th century the jewel in the crown of the Portuguese Empire was the vast colony of Brazil. With a rich plantation economy, it lived in close association with some areas of the African coast that were suppliers of slave labour. From the first decades of the 19th century this picture began to change. The independence of Brazil (1822), the slow ending of the slave trade and of slavery itself, as well as the increasing competition with other European countries over African territories transformed the Portuguese colonial system.

1.1. Re-focusing the Empire – from Brazil to Africa

The process of secession of Brazil was a gradual one. In 1808, the invasion of Portugal by the troops of Napoleon, forced King John VI to move the Court to Rio de Janeiro. In the new capital of the Empire, the monarch decreed the opening of the Brazilian ports to British navigation. The end of the national monopoly over the colonial trade produced an important crisis in the economy of metropolitan Portugal. The liberal revolution of 1820 was a part of the wider climate of economic, social, and political unrest and would force a reluctant King to return to Lisbon. With the intensification of conflicts between the authorities in Lisbon and those in Rio de Janeiro, Dom Pedro, the elder son of King John VI, proclaimed the independence of Brazil in 1822. Three years later, in 1825, a treaty was signed between the two States recognizing the new legal and political framework.

The old empire, based on the Atlantic commercial networks between Portugal, Brazil and Africa, was gone. During the 1820s and 1830s some started to look at the much less profitable colonies that were left in Africa,

mainly in Angola and Mozambique. The plan was to build there a new colonial area liable to replace Brazil. In the near future, the new settlements and economic markets were expected to support the development of national capitalism; at the same time they would help the Portuguese State gain more weight in the international arena. During the 1830s and 1840s there was an increasing number of politicians, military and businessmen who believed in this project. The colonial territories and its potentially vast and rich resources were deemed an important capital to be explored, taken as a heritage from a glorious past to be developed and passed over to the next generations. It was a path for the regeneration of the old national *grandeur*, one of the ways of curing the nation from its atavistic decadence. However, between the 1820s and the 1850s the African colonies were still living on the commercial networks that, in connection with the slave trade, continued to link Brazil to the coasts of Angola and Mozambique. The Portuguese colonial administration remained confined to some urban centres, ports and coastal areas. For centuries the slave trade had been the main economic activity of these territories and it did not need a wider and stable administrative structure nor a regular military presence everywhere. The pace of changes was slower than expected⁽³⁾.

The State's administration established by the first liberal Cabinets, between 1820 and 1823, was theoretically uniform from Lisbon to Guinea-Bissau in Africa or Macao in China. Power, networks and political control were centralized in the Cabinet and in Parliament, both based in Lisbon. Furthermore, the laws decreed to be in force in Portugal were also valid for the colonies. The 19th century legal doctrine called it the "model of assimilation"⁽⁴⁾. Based on the homogeneous application of the same laws and institutions throughout the Empire, it ignored diversity and local specificities. The European set of rules and laws was thought to be universal. However, it would only concern the very few areas and population

⁽³⁾ António José de Seixas, *As Colónias Portuguezas*, Lisbon, 1865, pp. 8-9; see, also, Valentim Alexandre, *Origens do Colonialismo Português Moderno (1822-1891)*, Lisbon, 1980; Francisco Bethencourt / Kirti Chaudhuri (eds.), *História da Expansão Portuguesa*, vol. IV (*Do Brasil para África, 1808-1930*), Lisbon, 1998; and João Pedro Marques, *Os Sons do Silêncio. O Portugal de Oitocentos e a abolição do tráfico de escravos*, Lisbon, 1999.

⁽⁴⁾ A good overview of the legal discussions and doctrines on colonial affairs can be found in J.F. Marnoco e Sousa, *Administração Colonial*, Coimbra, 1906.

considered as being civilized, all the others being left out of this sphere and treated with a not always benevolent paternalism. As a matter of fact, most colonial territories remained subordinated to a vague, in reality almost unrestricted, form of military administration. The relationship with indigenous populations, marked by the theoretical grant of the same civil laws and political rights, was merely virtual⁽⁵⁾.

In 1836, after the end of the Civil War (1832-1834) between liberals and absolutists, the viscount of Sá da Bandeira, then minister of Navy and Overseas, made public the new guidelines for colonial policy⁽⁶⁾. Its basis was the abolition of the slave trade (formally ordained in 10 December 1836) and the transformation of African economies through a greater investment in productive activities. The use of local labour in modern agriculture and a programme of settlements of European population would consolidate this change. Together, some other projects were carried out to reform the colonial administration and to reinforce Portuguese military occupation. Completing the new set of policies we could find economic initiatives, such as the protection given to navigation under the national flag, and the fiscal immunities offered to colonial trade in order to root its commercial networks in Portugal, breaking the old links with Brazil and the slave trade. In these plans, since the beginning, the progressive building of a close connection between the development of Portuguese capitalism and colonial expansion was implicit. In the first half of the 19th century, this set of policies became a common ground of ideas in the public sphere. However, it would be consecutively postponed. The poor State finances, the backwardness of the country's economic infrastructure, and the constant political struggles that crossed the liberal political field in Portugal, after 1834 and until 1851, did not allow them to be implemented.

⁽⁵⁾ See Ana Cristina Nogueira da Silva, *A Cidadania nos Trópicos. O Ultramar no constitucionalismo monárquico português (1820-c.1880)*, Ph.D. dissertation, Lisbon (Faculdade de Direito, Universidade Nova de Lisboa), 2004.

⁽⁶⁾ Bernardo de Sá Nogueira de Figueiredo (1795-1876), viscount and latter marquis of Sá da Bandeira, several times minister and Prime Minister. An Army officer, he was the mastermind of the Portuguese colonial model announced in the 1830s, but only developed after the 1850s. His name was also connected with most of the Portuguese abolitionist legislation.

The Ministry of Navy and Overseas was created in 1835 with the bureaucratic machinery left from the *Ancien régime's* Secretariats of State. In the years following its establishment, it continued to work with a small number of employees, unable to coordinate efficiently the enforcement of the new laws and the work of colonial governance. The tax services of the colonies continued to be managed by the rules of the past and by the old council's system that combined several branches of power in a single body. The colonial governors simply forgot to implement the anti-slave laws, very unpopular among the social and economic elites of the main cities of Portuguese Africa.

During this first half of the 19th century the knowledge of the territory was still precarious and the true extension of the Portuguese possessions in Africa unknown. However, it is a mistake to think that this was a special feature of the Portuguese Empire. Other colonial powers only knew the exact borders of their territories in China or in India. In Africa the European colonization had just begun to set up its modern structures and controlled mainly the coastal areas. On the other hand, the African kingdoms were not strong and organized States with widespread forms of specialized bureaucracy.

The dreamed-of expansion of the settlement of European population only had a minor outcome in the small city of Moçâmedes, in the south of Angola. Portuguese emigration during the 19th century continued to head towards Brazil and, on a smaller scale, to other places in South and North America. Between the end of the 1840s and the beginning of the 1850s the few available estimates show that Africa represented 3-4% of Portugal's entire trade. However, these small figures were even bigger than the ones for the colonies of the East. The Portuguese State profited little from the Empire; the output for the economy came indirectly, through the profits of the slave trade. The legal trade with the metropolis remained limited, and the administrative disarray and the financial deficit in the colonies had a preoccupying dimension⁽⁷⁾.

⁽⁷⁾ G. Clarence-Smith, *The Third Portuguese Empire 1825-1975*, Manchester, 1985, pp. 29-52.

1.2. Colonizing Africa – the early years (1851-1890)

Portuguese politics underwent important changes after 1851, when a military coup helped the renovation of the political elite and the building of new consensus among the liberal factions. Key-areas, such as the modernization of the State's apparatus and the development of public works, got an increasing attention. Colonial affairs and the Navy were not forgotten. The 1852 constitutional revision explicitly gave more latitude to colonial governors. Also, the Overseas Council (*Conselho Ultramarino*) was re-founded⁽⁸⁾.

A central role was again played by Sá da Bandeira. In 1852 he was made president of the Overseas Council. Working as an advisory and deliberative body this institution guided the policies and supervised the work of the authorities. The Overseas Council was decisive in the modernization of colonial policies, helping to mark the specificity and technical character of many of them, undoing the legal fiction that all Portuguese laws were elaborated to have universal application in all territories under their sovereignty. In fact, during the 1850s and 1860s (and until the reform of the Ministry in 1868), the importance of this body would be larger than the action of most ministers. The consolidation of territorial expansion, military occupation, the development of a plantation economy, the reinforcement of commercial relations with metropolitan Portugal were part of the old objectives, now brought together with more public money to spend.

Until 1850 there are no references to regular, organized and separately printed colonial budgets; nor was it established which parts of the public expenditure belonged to the budget of the metropolis and which parts fell under the budgets of the different territories. Only in 1852 did modern budgets begin to appear, involving very reduced amounts of public money⁽⁹⁾. In 1860, remembering his long years of work as a civil servant in the Colonial Office, Luz Soriano (1802-1891) wrote bitterly in his

⁽⁸⁾ Decree of 23 September 1851. For an overview, see Marcelo Caetano, *O Conselho Ultramarino: esboço da sua História*, Lisbon, 1967.

⁽⁹⁾ Artur R. de Almeida Ribeiro, *Administração Financeira das Províncias Ultramarinas. Proposta de lei orgânica e relatório apresentados ao congresso pelo ministro das colónias e leis n.º 277 e 278*, Coimbra, 1917, p. 58.

Memoirs: “our overseas provinces, from their discovery to our time, have been nothing other than a simple slavery nursery for America and a few small commercial emporiums to Europe”⁽¹⁰⁾. However, at a slow pace there were important transformations. During the 1850s efforts were made to reinforce the military presence and the occupation of African territories. The first attempt to establish regular lines of modern steamboats connecting the different Atlantic colonies came in 1858. In 1859, the Ministry of Navy and Overseas was thoroughly reformed. The weight of the services and the numbers of employees of the Colonial Office were raised.

In 1865, Macao, Portuguese India and the islands of Sao Tomé and Príncipe were in good or fair economic condition and able to subsist without central State money transfers. On the opposite side were East Timor, Mozambique and Angola. The metropolis subsidized most of its colonies, while spending an important amount of money to back steamship navigation. Still, in 1864, the State helped a group of capitalists to create the Overseas National Bank (*Banco Nacional Ultramarino*). This institution became the holder of important financial monopolies and was developed into both an instrument of penetration of the Portuguese State and a way of helping the development of the colonial economies and their bonds with Portugal⁽¹¹⁾.

Even before the Berlin Conference in 1885, there was already a progressive enlargement of the Portuguese elites involved in colonial affairs. The establishment of the Society of Geography of Lisbon, in 1876, and the growing weight of the colonial service in the military careers amplified this trend. Compared with the 1850s and 1860s, in the 1870s and 1880s the presence of colonial affairs in public debates was wider. The number of participants grew and the discussions left the offices of some politicians, journalists and entrepreneurs directly involved in the overseas businesses⁽¹²⁾. Some political guidelines remained similar from

⁽¹⁰⁾ Simão José da Luz Soriano, *Revelações da minha vida e memórias de alguns factos e homens meus contemporâneos*, Lisbon, 1860, p. 557.

⁽¹¹⁾ António José de Seixas, *As Colónias Portuguezas*, p. 13; see also Valentim Alexandre, “Portugal em Africa (1825-1974): uma perspectiva global”, Penélope, 11, 1993, pp. 53-66. The BNU was created by the Decree of 16 May 1864.

⁽¹²⁾ See Valentim Alexandre, “A Africa no imaginário político português (séculos XIX e XX)” ..., pp. 39-52.

the 1850s to the early 1880s and survived the death of Sá da Bandeira, in 1875. However, they never ceased to drift between the great rhetorical discourses of expanding civilization and the most prosaic commercial pragmatism that made them closer to reality.

The increasing European control over Africa was strongly helped in these decades of the 19th century by new technologies. The generalization and modernization of steam navigation, the installation of submarine telegraphic cables, new medical and sanitary techniques, the increase of the military presence, with the use of new technologies and tactics, allowed a more efficient occupation of the African territory. The set of structural transformations that shaped the modern Portuguese African Empire indeed took place in the last two decades of the 19th century. However, the economic enterprise, the attempt to follow the policies of new colonial powers and to strengthen diplomatic alliances came earlier. It simply trailed the growing development and integration of both international politics and international economics. This venture increased from 1872 to 1879. The Navy fleet was modernized with the clear objective of controlling the colonial seas (1875); organized public works operations started (1877)⁽¹³⁾; and free international trade and foreign investments were encouraged. At the same time, Portugal tried to settle an elaborate network of treaties with Great Britain, joining the interests of the two countries and putting the Portuguese Empire under the protection of the great colonial power of the time. Most of these resolutions, marked by a clear pragmatism, were formulated and implemented by Andrade Corvo⁽¹⁴⁾. As a result of these efforts, between 1886 and 1891 the trade of Portugal with Africa would double, even if it remained insignificant when compared with that of commercial partners like

⁽¹³⁾ The Law of 12 April 1876 authorised the Cabinet to get new loans up to 1000 *contos*. This money was supposed to be used exclusively in colonial public works. Expeditions and field work started in 1877. The Decree of 9 May 1878 allowed a new loan of 800 *contos*. However, it is not known the real impact of these first efforts.

⁽¹⁴⁾ João de Andrade Corvo (1824-1890), Army engineer, was minister of Public Works (1866-1867), Navy and Overseas (1872-1877), and Foreign Affairs (1871-1875 and 1878-1879). He performed a key role both in the diplomatic policies and in the orientation of colonial affairs from the 1870s onwards. See his: *Estudos sobre as Províncias Ultramarinas*, 4 vols., Lisbon, 1884.

England or Brazil⁽¹⁵⁾. The growing importance given to colonial policies and the diplomatic alliance with Great Britain allowed Portugal a good share of colonial territories during the Berlin Conference (1885). Old legal rights, historical precedence, and the permanent control over parts of the African coast made the country obtain more area than the land over which it had real control and exercised real sovereignty⁽¹⁶⁾.

1.3. *Empire, colonialism and nationalism (1890-1910)*

The political reactions against both the Anglo-Portuguese Treaty of Lourenço Marques (1879-1880) and the so-called “British ultimatum” (1890) were key moments in the development of modern nationalism in Portugal⁽¹⁷⁾. In January 1890, the British government demanded the immediate withdrawal of Portuguese troops from certain disputed areas in the interior of Mozambique. The subsequent treaty of 11 June 1891 put an end to Portuguese pretensions to build a large area of sovereignty, uniting the provinces of Angola and Mozambique, and therefore a coast-to-coast territory in the African continent. In 1890-1891, the nationalist protests lasted for months and the social and political unrest led to a first military revolt with an unambiguous Republican orientation. The Empire was transformed into the symbol of national values. Gradually, the ideas of regeneration and greatness of the homeland expressed in the phrase “overseas epic expansion” had combined with an anti-British

⁽¹⁵⁾ See António José Telo, *Economia e Império no Portugal Contemporâneo*, Lisbon, 1994, p. 209; and G. Clarence-Smith, *The Third Portuguese Empire 1825-1975...*, pp. 81-115.

⁽¹⁶⁾ In 1876 the number of troops scattered throughout the empire reached 7261 men. In 1887, its number raised to 9985 men. Of these, only 1193 were Europeans; most of them were the army and navy officers in command. See Miguel Eduardo Lobo de Bulhões, *Les Colonies portugaises. Court exposé de leur situation actuelle*, Lisbon, 1878, pp. 33-34, and António José Telo, *Economia e Império...*, p. 177.

⁽¹⁷⁾ See Valentim Alexandre, “A questão colonial no Portugal Oitocentista”, in V. Alexandre and Jill Dias (eds.), *O Império Africano (1825-1890)*, Lisbon, 1998, pp. 21-132; G. Clarence-Smith, *The Third Portuguese Empire 1825-1975...*, pp. 81-115; and Francisco Bethencourt / Kirti Chaudhuri (eds.), *História da Expansão Portuguesa*, vol. IV (*Do Brasil para África, 1808-1930*), Lisbon, 1998.

nationalism, which had a strong popular root in Portugal. From the 1890s onwards, the Republican Party would use this discourse as one of its most powerful ideological criticisms against the Portuguese liberal monarchy. The old regime was from then on described as a ruinous and corrupt oligarchy that neither stopped the decadence of the country nor improved colonial provinces. The latter were depicted as lands of immense wealth given to the nation by the blood of heroic ancestors, demanding only a full set of rational policies and big national investments. However, among the majority of the population, if many believed in these ideas, very few actually knew the colonies or had been there.

After 1890 another change would be apparent. In the precedent decades, some publicists, politicians and high rank officials advocated a more pragmatic and economic approach to colonial affairs. The principal option was the sale of less lucrative colonies, for instance Guinea or part of Mozambique. With these resources Portugal could start a full development of the economic potential of other, bigger and richer territories, such as Angola. Another alternative was a kind of partial alienation, downsizing and concentration of territories, this time in the context of diplomatic negotiations. The aim was again to consolidate the Empire and Portuguese rights in the richer colonies. The strength given to the relationship between Empire, colonialism and nationalism made these projects of sale and alienation disappear once and for all from the political and parliamentary agenda. References to it in the press or in speeches were understood as offensive to patriotic values and to the national community. In a parallel process, during the last decade of the 19th century the old paternalistic, anti-slavery liberalism that had marked the stages of the colonial political projects faded away definitively. The new Portuguese colonial ideology would be characterized by an obvious pragmatism. It intended to maximize the economic potential of the colonies, to occupy and define their borders, giving to indigenous inhabitants specific social and political statutes, based on the assumption of racial and cultural superiority of the Europeans⁽¹⁸⁾. All this followed the colonialism practiced by the other European powers of the time.

⁽¹⁸⁾ See, among others, the radical approach of Joaquim Pedro Oliveira Martins, *O Brazil e as Colonias Portuguezas*, Lisbon, 1880.

Nationalism also gave rise to economic protectionism. New laws published in 1892 helped the expansion of the colonial markets and the role of national shipping lines. The figures for direct trade were still small: in 1900 the Empire represented 3% of the imports of Portugal and absorbed more than 10% of the exports; in 1910 this had grown to 4% and a little more than 15%, respectively. Yet, Lisbon had consolidated her role as a trade interface for colonial business. The quantity of colonial products re-exported increased considerably, and between 1892 and 1914 African provinces became an important source of currency for Portuguese economy⁽¹⁹⁾.

In order to deal with both territorial occupation and economic improvement, some privileged Companies were established in 1888, 1891, 1892 and 1894. With this orientation the State was able to find partners to assist the development and penetration of its structures at a low cost. As a matter of fact, some companies got important monopolies and vast administrative authority. Small States inside the State itself, they ruled significant areas of Mozambique after the 1890s⁽²⁰⁾. A similar method was used to build the expensive railway infrastructures. In the 1890s and 1900s public and private investments were mostly placed in this colony. In Angola, the investments would be smaller, but the method remained the same.

This path was followed by the intensification of the so-called “pacification” military campaigns. African communities were now forced to an explicit recognition of Portuguese presence, occupation and rule. These expeditions took place between 1894 and 1898, in Mozambique, and continued in Angola, between 1901 and 1907. Being consensual among the Portuguese elites, military expeditions covered the last years of the Monarchy and were even extended during the Republican regime⁽²¹⁾.

⁽¹⁹⁾ G. Clarence-Smith, *The Third Portuguese Empire 1825-1975...*, pp. 81-90, and *Slaves, Peasants and Capitalists in Southern Angola 1840-1926*, Cambridge, 1979.

⁽²⁰⁾ The first of them, the *Companhia de Moçambique*, was founded in 1888 and controlled an area equivalent to one-fourth of this overseas province. Other *Companhias* were created during the 1890s: Niassa (1891), Zambézia (1892), and Moçamedes (1894). Most of the temporary concessions made to these enterprises would end during the First Republic. Only the *Companhia de Moçambique* was still alive in the 1930s.

⁽²¹⁾ René Peléssier, *Les Campagnes Coloniales du Portugal, 1844-1941*, Paris, 2004.

The military effort and the victories over the African tribal rulers would be enthusiastically celebrated in Portugal, enhancing the prestige and influence of military men in the oligarchic world of politics, high bureaucracy and business. However important, it is not accurate to presume that these campaigns had substituted in a radical way tribal rulers and indigenous potentates for white men civil servants. They were mainly carried out to impress and to force collaboration, making clear that there were no alternatives to European occupation. In order to assist the State in this vast orientation, Portuguese authorities started to subsidize missionary congregations⁽²²⁾. The visibility of the European presence and way of life were very much reinforced, entailing a significant social, political and cultural turn in many African communities.

To provide a framework for these new challenges in colonial administration and governance, the paradigm that had guided Portuguese decision-makers was also revised. An increasing number of politicians, military men and State officials started to question the highly centralized and uniform model that had oriented the country's colonial affairs since 1835, despite its uneven implementation. For them, only the transfer of larger administrative, regulatory and financial autonomy to colonial governors and their councils could allow a steady modernization of the overseas empire to get going⁽²³⁾. Portuguese elites were just taking ideas from the model already being implemented in the more flourishing British colonies.

This discussion between centralization and decentralization made some important steps in the last two decades of the Monarchy⁽²⁴⁾. In 1907, a largely decentralizing legislation was granted to Mozambique's government structures⁽²⁵⁾. However, this territory was just a part of the

⁽²²⁾ See Miguel Bandeira de Carvalho Jerónimo, *Livros Brancos, Almas Negras. O colonialismo português: programas e discursos*, M.A. dissertation, Lisbon (Faculdade de Ciências Sociais e Humanas, Universidade Nova de Lisboa), 2000.

⁽²³⁾ See, among others, António Enes, *Moçambique: relatório apresentado ao governo*, Lisbon, 1893, and Eduardo da Costa, *Estudo sobre a administração civil das nossas possessões africanas: memória apresentada ao Congresso Colonial Nacional*, Lisbon, 1903.

⁽²⁴⁾ A first set of reforms was implemented between 1894 and 1898, with the establishment of the *comissários-régios* in the colonies of Mozambique, Angola and India.

⁽²⁵⁾ See Decree of 23 May 1907.

Empire. The new debates also included discussions on the advantages or disadvantages of civil or military top-down government. During the 1890s and the 1900s the State did not alter the basic legal regulations of colonial administration. However, pragmatically, it steadily started to give a wider range of powers to the governors of overseas provinces. Authority and command were progressively accumulated in the hands of these officials and not in local advisory or representative councils. The administration became more personalized. Its heads were chosen from among a relatively restricted, but politically influential, group of military men with extensive colonial careers, or from among publicists and intellectuals with an important colonial profile. Paradoxically, more decentralization and autonomy implied the expansion of technical, financial and legal inspection and regulation by central services. The structures of the Ministry of Navy and Overseas grew considerably during the 1890s and the 1900s. The vast reforms of 1892 and 1902 increased the number of fiscal, sanitary, cartographic and public works divisions and boards. And this did not only happen on the side of the Overseas Department. In 1910, the Portuguese Navy had about 6,000 men, many of its officers carrying out official jobs in the colonies. The Army had around 13,000 men scattered all over the Empire; from these less than 4,000 were Europeans⁽²⁶⁾.

1.3. The colonial policy of the First Republic (1910-1926)

The Republic was declared on 5 October 1910. Soon afterwards, on 8 October, the denomination of most governmental ministries was altered. The Ministry of Navy and Overseas changed its name to Navy and Colonies. The introduction of the word “Colonies” obviously translated the nationalistic character of the Republican Party programme, which advocated the reinforcement of the relations between Portugal and the overseas territories. Less than one year later, in August 1911, a specific and independent ministry to address this area of government was finally established. In the next 15 years the new regime would intensify the efforts for colonial development.

⁽²⁶⁾ Angel Marvaud, *Le Portugal et ses Colonies. Étude politique et économique*, Paris, 1912, p. 275.

The Republican regime brought about an obvious growth of central State bureaucracy. In 1914 there were 24 departments (*direcções-gerais*), in 1920 they were 37, in 1923 they rose up to 39. This trend towards specialization of the administrative apparatus was particularly strong in the ministries that dealt with Public Works, Agriculture and Food Supplies. The number of employees and civil servants augmented, together with the modernization of work regulations and careers. The ministry of Colonies also saw its structures being vastly reformed and modernized in 1911, 1918, 1919 and 1920⁽²⁷⁾.

The bureaucratic reforms were followed by several military expeditions and the delimitation of the fluid colonial borders (1913-1914)⁽²⁸⁾. Administrative decentralization and financial autonomy were stimulated: the decision-making power of governors was increased; advisory and legislative councils to help the governors' performance were established; and each colony started to have fiscal (and some budgetary) autonomy, and to be allowed to contract public loans. Having been implemented in 1914, these measures would be further reinforced in 1919⁽²⁹⁾. At the same time, the Republican regime tried to reorganize local political life and the use of civil and political rights in accordance with its ideological programme.

While in 1910 the capacity of control over local communities was still limited and fragile in many parts of the Empire, in the 1920s the panorama had clearly changed. Military occupation was at last effective in vast areas of Angola and Mozambique, the indigenous people having been subdued and disarmed⁽³⁰⁾. The thousands of kilometres of roads, railways, and telegraphic lines that were built enabled then the fast deployment of troops, with a reduced number of military garrisons, from

⁽²⁷⁾ A. H. de Oliveira Marques (ed.), *História da I República: as estruturas de base*, Lisbon, 1978, p. 526.

⁽²⁸⁾ See the example of the borders between Angola and the Belgian Congo established by the Law of 13 June 1914.

⁽²⁹⁾ For an overview of the new political, administrative and financial guidelines followed by the Republican governments, see Artur R. de Almeida Ribeiro, *Administração Financeira das Províncias Ultramarinas...*, pp. 3-25.

⁽³⁰⁾ Several military campaigns were taken up in Mozambique (1913), Angola (1914 and 1915), Guiné (1913, 1914 and 1915) and Timor (1913 and 1915). See René Peléssier, *Les campagnes coloniales du Portugal...*

north to south and from coast to inland⁽³¹⁾. Also, the Portuguese administration became more operative: taxes were imposed and collected; the control of labour market and its flows was enhanced; and growing specific agricultural species was made compulsory for African communities, sometimes using very brutal methods. At the same time, there was an effort to eradicate old forms, still tolerated, of quasi-slavery. New statutes were given to natives, Europeans and the “assimilated population”. A clear legal distinction was made between indigenous and “civilized citizens” – the latter being mostly Europeans, some Creole elites and a few black Africans. Therefore, legal discrimination got a more stable framework. Finally, it should be noted that the short-lived Republican regime continued to pursue the old dream of raising the number of the European population in Africa. In 1918, there were 13,000 Europeans living in Angola and 11,000 in Mozambique⁽³²⁾. The overwhelming majority of Portuguese migrants continued, however, to go to Brazil.

2. The Machinery of Government and the Management of Colonial Affairs: Continuities and Changes

2.1. *From the Ancien Régime to the triumph of Liberalism (1736-1834)*

In the early 19th century, there were two main institutional bodies in charge of overseas affairs: the Overseas Council (*Conselho Ultramarino*) and the Secretariat of State for Navy and Overseas. The former had been established in 1642 as an advisory and executive board to deal mostly with regulatory, fiscal and legal issues. The latter was created in 1736 by one of the major reforms of the *Ancien régime*’s central administration, which established three main top-down organizations (the *Secretarias de Estado*) located in Lisbon and focused on Home, War, and Navy and Overseas affairs. The 1736 ordinance also aimed to prescribe a first

⁽³¹⁾ F. Cunha Leal, *Coisas de Tempos Idos. As Minhas Memórias. Romance duma época, duma família e duma vida (1888 a 1917)*, vol. I, Lisbon, 1966, p. 303-304.

⁽³²⁾ See António José Telo, *Economia e Império...*, p. 224, and Gervase Clarence-Smith, *The Third Portuguese Empire...*, pp. 112-113. In 1860, the so-called white population of Angola summed up only 3000 individuals.

distribution of responsibilities among offices. However, many exceptions and overlapping forms of control and authority persisted, following the governance model of the time. This administrative network remained mostly unchanged until the first liberal regime in Portugal (1820-1823). In 1821, the Parliament approved a law to slim the Secretariat of State for Navy and Overseas, suppressing the colonial services. It was considered that there was an unreasonable accumulation of affairs in just one office, led by one single man, who could never be familiar with the huge variety of issues under his command. The Parliament thus decided to distribute all the diverse overseas affairs among the different central offices. This “integrationist” legislation was quickly changed in 1823, after a royalist coup that put an end to the first liberal era. A new decree blamed the 1821 law for having created chaos and administrative lethargy in most colonial affairs, advocating that they needed a specific treatment and a suitable administrative network. During the years of the Civil War the same dilemmas appeared in the plans of political decision-makers. In 1832, the Navy and Overseas Office was organized in three divisions (*repartições*). This first attempt to specialise bureaucratic flows did not last for long. In 1834, the overseas bureaucracy was again reformed. All the issues and documents from the colonies were once more divided among the other central administration bodies⁽³³⁾.

2.2. The Ministry of Navy and Overseas (1835-1910)

The creation of the Ministry of Navy and Overseas (*Ministério da Marinha e Ultramar*) in May 1835 ensured a stable and lasting governmental framework for colonial affairs. In 1838, the ministry was internally divided into two autonomous administrative units, one for the navy and the other for the overseas territories, while keeping a restricted specialization of its bureaucratic work, and a small number of civil

⁽³³⁾ See A. C. Nogueira da Silva, *A Cidadania nos Trópicos...*; António Manuel Hespanha, «A revolução e os mecanismos do poder», in: António Reis (ed.), *Portugal Contemporâneo*, vol. I, Lisbon, 1990, pp. 107-136; and Miriam Halpern Pereira (ed.), *A crise de Antigo Regime e as Cortes Constituintes de 1821-1822. Estudos e documentos*, 5 vols., Lisbon, 1992.

servants. The majority of high-rank civil servants never had worked in or visited the colonies. However, after many years of service they were familiar with files, the military and administrative structures, their agents and main issues.

In 1843, a first set of work regulations was published, and the overseas unit was organized in four divisions, according to geographical criteria (India, Macao and Timor; Angola; Mozambique; Cape Verde and Sao Tomé and Príncipe). Important areas, such as colonial budgets, continued however to be dealt with by a Navy accounting unit⁽³⁴⁾. Major developments in the Ministry of Navy and Overseas took place during the 1850s: the re-foundation of the Overseas Council (1851)⁽³⁵⁾, the establishment of an autonomous accounting and finance division (1851), a new set of instructions for bureaucratic work and discipline (1853)⁽³⁶⁾, and the first comprehensive and modernizing reform (1859). This increased the number of civil servants in the whole Ministry (from 103 in 1854, to 164)⁽³⁷⁾, and reorganized it in three departments (*direcções*): Navy, Overseas and Finances. The Overseas Department continued to be organized in four divisions (see Table 2), which in turn were organized according to main colonial issues and not, as before, to geographical areas. It was a clear attempt to promote uniformity both in colonial policies and in the set of administrative regulations and directives that were implemented. Since a large majority of the personnel had never worked in or visited the overseas provinces, the 1859 reform also started to appraise colonial experience in the selection and promotion of officials. For the military staff it was specifically required to have served in the overseas territories. For the civilians an administrative training in the colonies was not yet a precise requisite, but an added value that might be decisive when choosing a candidate. Finally, responsibilities, instructions for managing bureaucratic routines, and disciplinary norms were more clearly established by this reform.

⁽³⁴⁾ See Decree of 15 February 1843.

⁽³⁵⁾ See Pedro Diniz, *O Conselho Ultramarino e as Colónias*, Lisbon, 1868.

⁽³⁶⁾ Decree of 31 August 1853.

⁽³⁷⁾ The number of employees in 1854 was collected from the *Relação nominal dos empregados do Estado apresentada às Cortes na Sessão de 1854*, Lisbon, 1855.

Between 1867 and 1871 the Portuguese public finances went through a very difficult period. In the midst of strong radical demagoguery, some attempts were made to adjust the machinery of government and to reduce its expenditure. Several ministries were reorganized, and among them the Ministry of Navy and Overseas. The December 1868 reform retained the three previous departments (renamed *direcções-gerais*), but drastically cut the number of its civil servants to 71. The Department of Overseas was reduced to three divisions, and at the same time an independent technical division was created to coordinate both Navy and Overseas health services. The reform also reinforced hierarchy and top-down control, increasing the minister's powers to appoint and promote civil and military officials. The December 1869 reform continued this orientation. It abolished some smaller units of the bureaucratic machinery and slightly decreased the total number of employees to 65 (see Table 2). The Finance Department was split between Navy and Overseas, therefore the original bicephalous structure of the ministry was restored⁽³⁸⁾.

The subsequent reform, in 1878, did not alter the general structure, but increased both the number of administrative units and that of employees. In the Overseas Department, two new divisions, and four new, small technical units (called *secções*) – to deal with sanitary, health and public work issues – were introduced. The staff of the whole Ministry was now composed of 91 persons; among them, 39 high and middle rank officials (against ten in 1868) were affiliated with the Overseas Department. Total ministry figures were smaller than the ones registered in 1859. This was due to the transfer of fiscal responsibilities, and its personnel, to the Finance Ministry. As regards the number of overseas bureaucrats, its first increase in many years actually occurred in 1878. An innovation of this reform was the very detailed learning requirements demanded for the nomination of new officials. For instance, candidates for almost all posts of heads of division or of technical units were requested to have specialized academic credentials, and in some cases professional training in colonial administration⁽³⁹⁾. A far-reaching

⁽³⁸⁾ For further information see the Decree of 5 October 1869 and the Decree of 1 December 1869.

⁽³⁹⁾ *Decretos da Organização da Secretaria de Estado dos Negócios da Marinha e Ultramar e das Repartições Fiscal da Fazenda de Marinha e de Contabilidade Industrial do Arsenal da Marinha*, Lisbon, 1878.

institutional novelty took place in 1883, when the commission for colonial cartography was established as a relatively autonomous unit. This board would have a very long life and would be responsible for mapping the frontiers of Portuguese African territories. In 1888 it was time for the modernization of the colonial tax administration. Thus, the Portuguese State was gradually elaborating all the proper instruments for a more effective and profitable occupation of its overseas territories⁽⁴⁰⁾.

The December 1892 reform was clearly a major step in the same direction and tried to give an effective answer to the new challenges of European colonization. According to the minister of Navy and Overseas' preamble to this reform, the bureaucratic flow had increased so much since 1878 that the personnel had become insufficient. Therefore the staff of high and middle rank officials of the Overseas Department increased to 59. The internal bureaucratic organization reached a peak of specialization: while the number of divisions (six) did not change, the *secções* raised to 17 (see Table 2). At the same time, each of these units got a detailed description of its responsibilities and duties, and work instructions acquired a very methodical outline⁽⁴¹⁾. During the 1890s and the 1900s additional reforms were implemented in specific administrative units – like colonial public works (1892), health services (1895), taxes (1900), railways (1900) and army (1901)⁽⁴²⁾. In all these specialized structures the number of civil servants rose, and colonial experience and university degrees became largely required for the appointment of officials and experts. The two organizations established in 1900, to deal with tax services and railways, took the form of autonomous departments. As a consequence, the numbers of civil servants working in the Overseas

⁽⁴⁰⁾ The cartography board was created by the Decree of 19 April 1883. The overseas tax bureaucracy was reformed by the Decrees of 20 December 1888 and of 7 November 1889. See, also, the preamble to the project submitted by the minister of Navy and Overseas, F. Ressano Garcia, to the Parliament on 24 May 1889.

⁽⁴¹⁾ *Organização da Secretaria de Estado dos Negócios da Marinha e Ultramar aprovada por decreto de 19 de Dezembro de 1892 e organização dos serviços de obras públicas, comércio e indústria na Direcção-Geral do Ultramar e províncias ultramarinas aprovado por decreto de 20 de Agosto de 1892*, Lisbon, 1892.

⁽⁴²⁾ Decrees of 20 August 1892 (public works), 13 July 1895 (health services), 14 September 1900 and 3 October 1901 (colonial tax departments), 19 October 1900 (railways), and 14 November 1901 (overseas military organization).

Department decreased to 70 in the August 1902 ministry reform⁽⁴³⁾, and its *secções* were reduced to 13 (see Table 2). However, taking all kinds of bureaucratic units as a whole we can see that the colonial central administration did increase its weight.

The 1902 reform set up new technical and advisory councils and boards, while being closely preceded by the foundation of the Colonial Hospital and the School for Tropical Medicine, in April 1902. Some years later, in January 1906 one *secção* to deal with colonial agriculture was created inside the Overseas Department, in connection with the establishment of a botanic garden, a museum and a laboratory. At the same time the Colonial College in Lisbon was inaugurated⁽⁴⁴⁾.

In short, since the 1830s, the Colonial Office had been transformed from a small, undifferentiated structure into a larger and modern bureaucratic apparatus. However, central coordination was still lacking. Although it had been discussed with increasing attention during the 1900s, the establishment of an independent ministry for the colonies was not implemented by the monarchic politicians⁽⁴⁵⁾.

2.3. The establishment of the Ministry of Colonies under the First Republic

Once in power, the Republicans immediately changed the denominations of most ministries. The former Ministry of Navy and Overseas was renamed Ministry of Navy and Colonies. A few months later, in May 1911,

⁽⁴³⁾ *Regulamento da Secretaria de Estado dos Negócios da Marinha e Ultramar e Respectivas Corporações Consultivas (Decreto de 13 de Agosto de 1902)*, Lisbon, 1902.

⁽⁴⁴⁾ See Decrees of 24 April 1902, 18 January 1906 and 25 January 1906. The Decree of 18 January 1906 gave priority to graduates from the Colonial College in the recruitment process of officials for the Ministry of Navy and Overseas. However, this clause took a long time to be implemented.

⁽⁴⁵⁾ For further information on the Ministry of Navy and Overseas see, *inter alia*, *Inquérito acerca das repartições de Marinha...*, 2 vols., Lisbon, 1856; *Organização da Secretaria de Estado dos Negócios da Marinha e Ultramar aprovada por decreto de 19 de Dezembro de 1892...*, Lisbon, 1892; Rui Enes Ulrich, *Política Colonial*, Coimbra, 1909; and the reports of the ministers F. Felisberto Dias Costa (1897), António Eduardo Vilaça (1899), António Teixeira de Sousa (1902), Manuel António Moreira Júnior (1904) and António Cabral (1909). Most of these reports were commonly titled as *Relatório, propostas de lei e documentos relativos às possessões ultramarinas*.

its internal structure was enlarged, with the incorporation of the Inspection-General of Overseas Finances and Taxes (*Inspecção-Geral da Fazenda das Colónias*) and the Department of Overseas Railways (*Direcção dos Caminhos-de-Ferro Ultramarinos*), both of them being State units that had formerly enjoyed a relative autonomous status. Two departments were then established – one for taxes and finances and the other (called explicitly Department of Colonies) to address the rest of the affairs – as well as 11 divisions. The total number of civil servants grew from 70, in 1902, to 174. The *secções* were reduced (from 13 to 8) and became mostly gathered around the new taxes divisions. Another change made by the May 1911 reform was the cutback of technical councils and boards (e.g., three advisory agencies were merged and unified in a renovated Colonial Council). Since a bigger bureaucratic apparatus and the increasing development of overseas affairs would require civil servants with more expertise and experience, the reform also introduced new criteria for selection and promotion of permanent officials, sharpening a trend that dated back from the last years of the Monarchy. The Department of Colonial Taxes and Finances (*Direcção Geral de Fazenda das Colónias*) was the one that went further in this direction. Its employees were now chosen by public examination, from among those already working in local colonial tax services. Moreover, civil servants from the central office could be sent on temporary missions to supervise or inspect the local tax colonial divisions. It was an obvious method to promote internal careers, which would both increase internal knowledge of the bureaucratic machinery, and permit a sort of constant training of the Ministry's staff. Officials from the other department of the Ministry could also be sent out on temporary missions, never for less than two years. The May 1911 reform already emphasized that future regulatory legislation should take temporary colonial assignments as a decisive factor for promotion. This prospective legislation was also to set a new framework for admissions bearing in mind the candidates who had degrees from the Colonial College. Thus, an ancillary reform decreed on September 1911 established a mechanism of "rotation" – i.e., the chiefs of division, engineers and officials of the Department of Colonies that had never worked in the overseas provinces should be sent there for training periods of at least two years. Yet the implementation of this regulation would prove difficult: it was expensive, vacant positions were difficult to find and manage, and civil servants often tried to resist transfers. In 1913 and 1914, new legislation made

these rules optional. At the same time, it opened the possibility for central and local officers to exchange posts. The general orientation of the Ministry was to extend the colonial experience as much as possible among the majority of its senior officers. However, until the reform of 1918, there was not a mandatory legal framework. Many aspects of the bureaucratic routine and careers continued to be ruled by a combination of pragmatism and the old rules of procedures of August 1902.

Although significant, the enlargement brought by the 1911 reform seems bigger and deeper than it actually was. In fact, looking closely we did not find any newly made administrative units, or even the creation of new services in order to manage areas still untouched by State intervention. The 1911 reform was mainly a vast reorganization and professionalization of previously existing bureaucratic services, rather than a thorough rebuild of the Colonial Office, like many republicans dreamed of⁽⁴⁶⁾. Nevertheless, it made the extensive reform that had persistently been postponed during the last decade of the Monarchy.

The Constitution of August 1911 explicitly approved innovative decentralizing guidelines for colonial administration. More administrative, fiscal and budgetary autonomy was to be given to all overseas provinces, according to their “present level of civilization”. In the same month, a few days later, a Parliament law established an independent Ministry of Colonies, setting apart for ever the Navy and Overseas Offices. These steps were followed by a new regulation for the local colonial public works divisions, in November 1911. For the first time each colonial government could manage its local staff and, up to a reasonable amount, authorize new public works. In 1912 it was time for important modifications in both local tax divisions and agronomic services, according to the same principles. The Portuguese First Republic was definitively setting the framework for a bigger venture in colonial affairs. In 1914 the specific guidelines for each Colony’s status were approved⁽⁴⁷⁾. The process took some time and the statuses of the main colonies were published in 1917⁽⁴⁸⁾. Meanwhile, in 1914, a central board to coordinate

⁽⁴⁶⁾ See, for instance, the project submitted by the minister of Colonies to the Parliament on 26 April 1912. The project was never discussed.

⁽⁴⁷⁾ Decrees of 15 August 1914.

⁽⁴⁸⁾ See, for instance, the statute of the colony of Mozambique published by the Decree of 23 May 1917.

the efforts to improve the settling of European population was created⁽⁴⁹⁾; as in precedent attempts, very small accomplishments were achieved.

A short authoritarian experience during 1918 suspended this trend. Supported by the Armed Forces and some conservative parties, the dictatorship of Sidonio Pais tried to remake the political and administrative structures of the Portuguese State. The Ministry of Colonies was again reformed, and the relations with colonies became more centralized. The Secretariat-General was eliminated and all its powers transferred to a new and vast cabinet minister's division. The number of administrative units and their employees grew again. Departments increased to 4 and divisions to 19. Colonial experience was required for almost every permanent posts, strengthening a trend that would become even more obvious in the next few years⁽⁵⁰⁾.

After the assassination of Sidonio Pais in December 1918, the former Republican colonial legislation and orientations were restored, extended and intensified. On May 1919 a new reform of the Ministry of Colonies implied an expansion and increasing specialization of its bureaucratic apparatus. Republicans were at last trying to build a vast structure able to help, inspect and regulate the increasing autonomy of the colonial governors⁽⁵¹⁾ and their advisory and legislative councils. The Secretariat-General was re-established; each department got a specific *corpus* of staff with defined and permanent careers; both health and public works services were enlarged; cartographic and diplomatic agencies and boards were upgraded and merged into a new department⁽⁵²⁾.

In all departments a previous experience in colonial administration became a basic requirement for personnel recruitment and promotion. The Ministry tried again to increase the "rotation" of its technical staff, as well as the personnel exchanges between central and local offices. The Colonial Council continued to be the main advisory and technical board. According to the new organizational structure of the Ministry, there were six Departments, 17 divisions, and 40 sections. The total

⁽⁴⁹⁾ Decree of 14 October 1914.

⁽⁵⁰⁾ Decree of 8 May 1918.

⁽⁵¹⁾ Renamed high-commissioners (*altos-comissários*) in the major colonies by the Decrees of 7 and 20 August 1920 and 9 October 1920.

⁽⁵²⁾ *Organização do Ministério das Colónias. Decreto n.º 5.572 de 10 de Maio de 1919*, Lisbon, 1919.

number of civil servants rose to 262, thus increasing by 50% compared with 1911. The May 1919 reform was technically accurate and consensual. However, the large organization that had been built turned out to be very expensive. In the early 1920s, State finances experienced huge deficits and monetary deregulation. In October 1920, a new reform was made basically to reduce the costs of an expanded apparatus: the number of divisions was shrunk to 15, and that of sections to 30; the staff decreased to 202 employees. However, most of the regulations concerning careers remained in force and colonial experience was still required. This reform would last beyond the military coup of May 1926 which put an end to the Republican parliamentary regime.

After 1926, the autonomous colonial governments were drastically reformed. The financial autonomy was reduced, the budgets started to be subject to the approval of the minister of Colonies; and the *altos-comissários* were replaced by governors with reduced powers. This political line would remain unchanged during the first decades of the “New State” led by António de Oliveira Salazar.

The colonial policy followed another model. The idea of one vast and unified territory from Portugal to Timor won the spirits and the public sphere. The ownership and colonization of overseas, the civilization of indigenous populations, continued to be conceived as historical functions of the European motherland; the colonial territories were seen as an integral part of an inalienable Nation, formed by different people endowed with different statutes and civilization levels. The administrative guidelines and decision making process would be centralized once again in Lisbon, the power of the minister of the colonies reinforced. The nationalist speech rose, and so did the political and economical leadership of the metropolis. The Empire would start to play a very important ideological part for the new authoritarian regime, even if Salazar never visited any of the colonies. The Colonial Act gave form to this ideological turn and became its fundamental law doctrine. Ordained on 8 July 1930 it would be incorporated in the Constitution promulgated in 1933 by the *Estado Novo*. Until 1951 it continued to be the fundamental constitutional framework for the Portuguese colonies⁽⁵³⁾.

⁽⁵³⁾ Armindo Monteiro, “As grandes directrizes da governação ultramarina no período que decorreu entre as duas guerras mundiais (1919-1939)”, *Boletim Geral das Colónias*, n.º 206-207, 1942, p. 13. See also Valentim Alexandre, “Ideologia,

3. Prosopography of the Political and Administrative Heads of the Colonial Office (1851-1926)

From the beginning of the so-called *Regeneração* (1851)⁽⁵⁴⁾, which initiated a new period of political consensus and institutional modernisation, until the breakdown of Monarchy, there were 44 individuals who were ministers of Navy and Overseas and seven senior officers⁽⁵⁵⁾ who ruled the Department of Overseas. Under the First Republic, the Ministry of Colonies⁽⁵⁶⁾ was headed by 36 individuals, and its various departments by 11 directors-general (see Tables 3a and 3b). While already moderately intense in the Monarchy, ministerial turnover became almost frantic in the short-lived First Republic, which was marked by endemic government instability (the average Cabinet duration was 17 and 4 months in the two periods, respectively). Conversely, in both regimes the administrative elite showed a stable length of tenure, as the Colonial Office illustrates. Thus, for example, Francisco Costa e Silva (1826-1899) was director-general of Overseas for nearly 23 years (1876-1899); and Joaquim Basílio de Albuquerque e Castro (1853-1925) was secretary-general of the Ministry of Colonies almost continuously for 11 years (1913-1925). The establishment of the First Republic entailed the replacement of the political elite and of many high-rank civil servants, but in the new Ministry of Colonies the discontinuity with the past was less apparent, namely as regards the recruitment of top bureaucrats. Albuquerque e Castro and two other directors-general – Alfredo Freire de Andrade (1859-1929) and Manuel Joaquim Fratel (1867-1938) – had been involved in monarchic politics; the two first adhered to the Republican regime soon after its establishment, the latter kept away from party politics.

economia e política: a questão colonial na implantação do Estado Novo”, *Análise Social*, vol. XXVIII (123-124), 1993, pp. 1117-1136, and A. E. Duarte Silva, “Salazar e a política colonial do Estado Novo: o Acto Colonial (1930-1951)”, in AAVV, *Salazar e o Salazarismo*, Lisbon, 1989.

⁽⁵⁴⁾ Chronologically, the exact starting point for the making of the list of ministers and directors-general is the appointment of the 21st constitutional Cabinet on 22 May 1851.

⁽⁵⁵⁾ In the Ministry of Navy and Overseas the titles of “director” and “director-general” were introduced by the 1859 and 1868 reforms, respectively.

⁽⁵⁶⁾ Including here the transient Ministry of Navy and Colonies (1910-1911).

Yet, regime change had an impact on some background characteristics of the ministers and state administrators who dealt with colonial affairs. A first impressive contrast regards their geographic origins. Under the Monarchy, the majority of ministers (65%) and directors-general (57%) were born in the major urban centres, and the capital city was largely over-represented (a share of 41% and 29%, respectively). During the First Republic small villages and towns were the birthplace of almost three-fifths of ministers and of all directors-general. As hypothesised elsewhere, this geographical profile may be related with the lower social origins of the new ruling elite⁽⁵⁷⁾. It should be stressed that an unprecedented and sizeable minority of Republican ministers of the Colonies (11%) were born in the overseas territories (see Table 4). As concerns the age of first-time officeholders, regime change brought about a slight rejuvenation: the mean age of ministers fell from 48 to 47 years, while among directors-general dropped from 58 to 56 years. A trait of continuity was the maintenance of a large age gap between administrators and politicians, and the persistent seniority of the former (see Table 5). Looking at academic credentials, at ministerial level the dominance of university and military academy graduates was uncontested throughout the two periods: 84% and 91%, respectively. Data on directors-general disclose a different picture: the share of directors-general with higher education was only 43% in the Monarchy, rising to 91% in the First Republic – an upward trend that reveals a changing career pattern. In contrast to most civilian ministries, usually overpopulated with law graduates, military training was the prevailing educational background of the political and administrative heads of the Colonial Office. Indeed, the armed forces were their major recruiting ground, and regime change reinforced this (see Tables 6 and 7). On the whole, the military drawn from the Army outnumbered those from the Navy; yet, under the First Republic they were almost balanced at ministerial level (15 soldiers and 13 sailors). The most stunning development in the occupational background of both ministers and directors-general was undoubtedly the increasing role played by training

⁽⁵⁷⁾ See Pedro Tavares de Almeida / António Costa Pinto, "Portuguese Ministers, 1851-1999: Social Background and Paths to Power", in Pedro Tavares de Almeida *et al.* (eds.), *Who Governs Southern Europe? Regime Change and Ministerial Recruitment, 1850-2000*, London, 2003, p. 20.

in the colonial administration (see Table 8). Therefore, the severe accusation made in the past by Barbosa Leão (1818-1888), a publicist and Africanist, that in the Ministry of Navy and Overseas “as a rule neither ministers nor officials knew the colonies”⁽⁵⁸⁾, did not apply to the heads of the republican Ministry of Colonies.

Finally, it is worth while mentioning that an overwhelming majority of both ministers and directors-general had had a previous political career, mainly as MPs (see Table 9). A few of them were even representatives of the small number of overseas constituencies. Parliamentary socialisation declined under the First Republic, owing to a stronger presence of the military (namely, those with a more “professional” profile).

In some late 19th-century novels, the portfolio of Navy and Overseas is commonly seen both as an easier starting point and a promising springboard for the ministerial career of ambitious characters. Actually, between 1851 and 1910, three-fourths of the ministers of Navy and Overseas were newcomers in the Cabinet, whereas in the First Republic this proportion increased to four-fifths (see Table 9). Some leading figures of the Monarchy, like Viscount Sá da Bandeira or Fontes Pereira de Melo, started their brilliant political *cursus honorum* holding this portfolio; on the whole, five Prime Ministers appointed between 1851 and 1910 commenced their ministerial careers holding the portfolio of Navy and Overseas.

⁽⁵⁸⁾ *Diário da Camara dos Senhores Deputados*, session of 15 March 1880, p. 896. In the same vein, but using a more corrosive tone, the novelist Eça de Queiroz (1845-1900) mentioned that the count of Abranhos, one of his famous characters, was minister of Navy and Overseas for two years, despite saying that Mozambique was in the West coast of Africa (*O conde de Abranhos*, posthumously published in 1925).

Tables

Table 1 - Bureaucratic Reforms of the Colonial Office (1820-1926)

Ministry of Navy and Overseas	
Decree	1821, November 8
Law	1823, October 3
Decree	1834, July 28
Law	1835, April 25
Decree	1835, May 2
Decree	1838, May 25
Decree	1843, February 25
Decree	1851, December 12
Law	1859, September 6
Decree	1868, December 29
Decree	1869, December 1-2
Decree	1878, September 18
Decree	1892, December 19
Decree	1902, August 13
Decree	1910, October 8
Ministry of Colonies	
Decree	1911, May 27
Decree	1911, August 27
Decree	1918, May 8
Decree	1919, May 10
Decree	1920, October 16

Table 2 - Bureaucratic Expansion of the Colonial Office (1859-1920)

Year	Organisational units			Staff			
	Nr of Depts.	Nr. of Divisions	Nr. of Sections	High-rank ^a	Middle rank	Low-rank	Total
1859	1	4	–	5	6	12	23
1868	1	3	–	4	6	14 ^c	10
1869	1	4	–	5	15	13 ^c	20
1878	1	6	4	7	32	18 ^c	39
1892	1	6	17	7	52	14	73
1902	1	6	13	7	57	13	70
1911	2	11	8	13	98	53	164
1918	4	15	36	21 ^b	88	89 ^d	198
1919	6	17	40	23	152	87	262
1920	6	15	30	21	124	57	202

Department= *Direcção-Geral*; Division= *Repartição*; Section= *Secção*

^a Includes the heads of department (*directores-gerais*) and of divisions (*chefes de repartição*).

^b Includes two deputy director-generals.

^c The staff is the same for the Department of Navy and the Department of Overseas.

^d Includes provisional staff (*pessoal eventual*).

Table 3a - List of Secretary-Generals and Director-Generals:
Ministry of Navy and Overseas (1851-1910)

	Names	Term in office
Secretary-Generals	António Pedro de CARVALHO	02.06.1851 - 29.03.1858
	António Jorge Oliveira LIMA	29.03.1858 - 30.01.1863
	Manuel Jorge Oliveira LIMA	09.02.1863 - 11.07.1876
	Isidoro Francisco GUIMARÃES	21.07.1876 - 11.01.1883
	Francisco Joaquim Costa e SILVA	20.01.1883 - 01.03.1899
	Francisco Felisberto Dias COSTA	09.11.1899 - 21.06.1910
	António Duarte Ramada CURTO	21.06.1910 - 24.10.1910
Directors or Director-Generals	António Jorge de Oliveira LIMA	10.09.1859 - 30.01.1863
	Manuel Jorge de Oliveira LIMA	09.02.1863 - 11.07.1876
	Francisco Joaquim Costa e SILVA	20.07.1876 - 01.03.1899
	Francisco Felisberto Dias COSTA	09.11.1899 - 21.06.1910
	António Duarte Ramada CURTO	21.06.1910 - 24.10.1910

**Table 3b - List of Secretary-Generals and Director-Generals:
Ministry of Colonies (1910-1926)**

	Names	Term in office
Secretary-Generals	Alfredo Augusto Freire de ANDRADE	23.08.1911 - 27.09.1913
	Joaquim Basílio C. S. Albuquerque e CASTRO	27.09.1913 - 08.05.1918 15.05.1919 - 04.11.1925
	Pedro Francisco Massano de AMORIM	17.11.1925 - 12.06.1926
Director- Generals	Pedro Francisco Massano de AMORIM	19.05.1919 - 12.06.1926
	Alfredo Augusto Freire de ANDRADE**	06.04.1911 - 27.09.1913
	Joaquim Basílio C.S. Albuquerque e CASTRO	27.09.1913 - 04.11.1925
	Alfredo Baptista COELHO	23.07.1918 - 19.05.1919
	Domingos Eusébio da FONSECA**	31.05.1911 - 29.01.1916
	José Maria Teixeira GUIMARÃES*	24.10.1910 - 06.04.1911
	Manuel Joaquim FRATEL	12.02.1916 - 00.00.1936
	Domingos FRIAS	15.05.1920 - 00.00.1929
	Eduardo Augusto MARQUES	23.07.1918 - 15.05.1920
	Ernesto Júlio de Carvalho e VASCONCELOS	15.05.1919 - 16.10.1920 11.12.1925 - 00.00.1928
	José de Brito Freire e VASCONCELOS	10.05.1919 - 16.10.1920

Table 4 - Place of Birth

	Monarchy (1851-1910)				First Republic (1910-1926)			
	Ministers		Directors-General		Ministers		Directors-General	
	Nr	%	Nr	%	Nr	%	Nr	%
Lisbon	18	40.9	2	28.6	7	19.4	0	0.0
Oporto	1	2.3	2	28.6	3	8.3	0	0.0
Major provincial cities	10	22.7	0	0.0	4	11.1	0	0.0
Rest of the country	13	29.5	1	14.3	14	38.9	8	72.7
Overseas	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	11.1	0	0.0
Foreign Countries	1	2.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Unknown	1	2.3	2	28.6	4	11.1	3	27.3
Total	44	100.0	7	100.0	36	100.0	11	100.0

Table 5 - Age Profile*

Age Brackets	Monarchy (1851-1910)				First Republic (1910-1926)			
	Ministers		Directors-General		Ministers		Directors-General	
	Nr	%	Nr	%	Nr	%	Nr	%
≤ 35 yrs	3	6.8	0	0.0	2	5.5	0	0.0
35-44	14	31.8	0	0.0	12	33.3	0	0.0
45-54	16	36.4	1	14.3	14	38.9	5	45.4
≥ 55	11	25.0	4	57.1	7	19.4	4	36.4
Unknown	–	–	2	28.6	1	2.8	2	18.2
Total	44	100.0	7	100.0	36	100.0	11	100.0
Mean Age (yrs)	47.9		58.4		47.1		55.7	

* At first appointment

Table 6 - Level of Education

Higher Education*	Monarchy (1851-1910)				First Republic (1910-1926)			
	Ministers		Directors-General		Ministers		Directors-General	
	Nr	%	Nr	%	Nr	%	Nr	%
Yes	37	84.1	3	42.8	33	91.7	10	90.9
No	7	15.9	2	28.6	2	5.5	1	9.1
Unknown	–	–	2	28.6	1	2.8	–	–
Total	44	100.0	7	100.0	36	100.0	11	100.0

* University and Military Academies graduates

Table 7 - Fields of Higher Education

	Monarchy (1851-1910)				First Republic (1910-1926)			
	Ministers		Directors-General		Ministers		Directors-General	
	Nr	%	Nr	%	Nr	%	Nr	%
Law	10	27.0	0	0.0	2	6.1	2	20.0
Maths./ Engineering	5	13.5	1	33.3	0	0.0	0	0.0
Military	18	48.7	1	33.3	25	75.8	7	70.0
Medicine	3	8.1	1	33.3	4	12.1	1	10.0
Others	1	2.7	0	0.0	1	3.0	0	0.0
Unknown	–	–	–	–	1	3.0	–	–
Total	37	100.0	3	100.0	33	100.0	10	100.0

Table 8 - Occupational Background*

	Monarchy (1851-1910)				First Republic (1910-1926)			
	Ministers		Directors-General		Ministers		Directors-General	
	Nr	%	Nr	%	Nr	%	Nr	%
Central Government	21	47.7	2	28.6	7	19.4	3	27.3
Colonial Administration	13	29.5	3	42.9	20	55.5	8	72.7
Military	19	43.2	3	42.9	28	77.8	7	63.6
Academic / Teacher	19	43.2	2	28.6	5	13.9	3	27.3
Professions	3	6.8	0	0.0	4	11.1	1	9.1
Others	14	31.8	0	0.0	2	5.5	0	0.0
Unknown	–	–	1	14.3	1	2.8	1	9.1
Nr. (total)	44	–	7	–	36	–	11	–

Nr.= Number of individuals

* Prior to first appointment. Multiple coding was applied whenever an individual had more than one occupational training.

Table 9 - Political Experience*

Office Held Before First appointment	Monarchy (1851-1910)				First Republic (1910-1926)			
	Ministers**		Directors-General		Ministers		Directors-General	
	Nr	%	Nr	%	Nr	%	Nr	%
Minister of Overseas/ Colonies	–	–	2	28.6	–	–	1	9.1
Minister (other portfollios)	11	25.0	1	14.3	7	19.4	0	0.0
MP	40	90.9	5	71.4	25	69.4	6	54.5
Peer	11	25.0	2	28.6	3	8.3	1	9.1
Prefect	8	18.2	1	14.3	3	8.3	4	36.4
Colonial Governor	8	18.2	2	28.6	9	25.0	0	0.0
Director-General of Overseas/ Colonies	1	2.3	–	–	2	5.5	–	–
Director-General (other Ministries)	1	2.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
None	1	2.3	0	0.0	5	13.9	1	9.1
Nr. (total)	44	–	7	–	36	–	11	–

Nr.= Number of individuals

* Prior to first appointment. Multiple coding was applied whenever an individual held more than one post

** Three individuals were appointed for the first time ministers of Overseas before 1851.

